

OFFICIAL MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING OF THE
ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED
ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

The Board of Trustees for the Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Arkansas School for the Deaf met for their monthly meeting on July 20, 2021.

Present: Dr. John McAllister, Chair; Dr. Samuel Atcherson, Vice-Chair; Faith McLaughlin, Secretary; Susan Pack, Board Member; James Caton, ASBVI Superintendent; Dr. Janet Dickinson, ASD Superintendent; Dr. Priya Gupta, ASB Parent Representative; Holley Mott, ASD Parent Representative; Jonathan Smith, Sydney Morriss and Eddie Schmeckenbecher (for Dr. Dickinson), Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community

Dr. John McAllister called the meeting to order at 5:08. The next meeting was scheduled for August 17, 2021 at the Arkansas School for the Deaf.

Joint Agenda

21-J-012 Motion to Approve Joint June, 2021 Minutes

Mr. Fagan moved to approve, Mrs. McLaughlin seconded. Motion passed.

Action Items - None

Discussion Items – None

There being no further business of Joint nature, the agenda moved to the Arkansas School for the Deaf.

Arkansas School for the Deaf

21-D-008 Motion to Approve Consent Items (Minutes, Financial Statement & Personnel Items)

Mrs. Pack moved to approve, Mrs. McLaughlin seconded. Motion passed.

Action Items

21-D-009 Motion to Approve 2021-2022 Student Handbook

Mr. Fagan moved to approve. Dr. Atcherson seconded. Motion passed

21-D-010 Motion to Approve 2021-2022 Employee Handbook

Mrs. Pack moved to approve. Mr. Fagan seconded. Motion passed

Dr. McAllister stated he had signed the ASD Personnel Policies & Salary Schedule.

21-D-011 Motion to Approve the School Level Improvement Plan

Mrs. Pack moved to approve. Mrs. McLaughlin seconded. Motion passed.

Discussion Items – None

Superintendent Report

A lot of work going on at ASD – Normally the 10-month employees earn comp time and are off during the summer but this year there was less opportunity for comp time during the school year. Many of them worked during the summer on a number of projects.

All white rails on campus were painted

Held summer retreats – Educational Leadership team and Admin Team

Attended ADE Retreat along with James

Shared ASD's Strategic Plan and how it aligns with ADE's plan

Fiscal year ended in June-will be able to carry over some funds into special maintenance

Middle School teachers attended the Nuts and Bolts symposium in Stillwater, OK

Agri teacher will be teaching welding

Gretchen shared that the building was cleaned completely, organized books.

Dr. Dickinson stated she and James were getting shared services moving this month

Mr. Caton stated Del Risinger is retiring and his last day is August 6th. He said they have been working with Roy on the transition and making structural changes to benefit both schools. Will also be bringing Ernie in over the custodial part. He said they had already been working on Health Services

Dr. Dickinson said she and James met with each of the Shared Services leaders

Roy has been taking over a lot of work with Shared Services and soon Ernie will

Dr. Dickinson read the list of purchases made this year. It was a good year.

Mrs. Pack asked how the numbers are looking. Dr. Dickinson said they went down a little this year but have eleven new students coming in the fall.

There being no further business for the Arkansas School for the Deaf, the agenda moved to the Arkansas School for the Blind

Arkansas School for the Blind

21-B-008 Motion to Approve Consent Items (Minutes, Financial Statement, Personnel Items)

Mrs. McLaughlin moved to approve. Mr. Fagan seconded. The motion passed

Action Items

21-B-009 Motion to Approve the 2021-2022 Student Handbook

Dr. Atcherson moved to approve. Mrs. McLaughlin seconded. Motion passed.

21-B-010 Motion to Approve the 2021-2022 Employee Handbook

Mrs. Pack moved to approve. Mrs. McLaughlin seconded. Motion passed

Dr. McAllister stated he signed the Personnel Policies & Salary schedule.

21-B-011 Motion to Approve the School Level Improvement Plan

Mrs. Pack moved to approve. Mr. Fagan seconded. Motion passed

Discussion Items – None

Superintendent Report

Mr. Caton said the District Improvement Plan would be in August
Vacancies popping up that were not expected
Posting and advertising to try to fill the vacancies
Kindergarten teacher has been hired and also a para
Two RA positions vacant due to retirements
Working on getting English and GT teacher
Worked with Department of Education in adding a Reading Specialist position for the school

Mrs. McLaughlin asked how many children use braille. Mr. Caton said talking large print vs. braille users – in terms of state assessment there will be a braille version of the assessment. Mrs. McLaughlin asked if the Reading Specialist would be approaching the reading component with braille. Mr. Caton said yes – they will be looking at all areas concerning literacy and helping develop a robust program. He thinks the kids will really benefit.

Superintendent Report continued:

Had the opportunity to share goals of the Strategic Plan and talk about the school at ADE retreat
Attended meeting with Sherry Young, HR Manager, to develop HR Strategic Plan
Monitoring guidelines that come out regarding COVID
Will encourage staff and students to wear masks
Will continue screening and keep in place what they can
Vicki, Health Services, working on clinics for school – hoping to get 12 and up plus staff vaccinated
Mrs. Pack said she heard of the possibility by September there would be something for younger children
Mr. Caton said he had been hearing ages 5 – 11
Busy working on getting positions filled and developing Shared Services
New hospital type beds for infirmary
Principal's report included in packet
July 1st several positions transferred to ADE Shared Services – Breonda Hodges, Jaime Priester, Kelly Thornton and Del's maintenance position.

Dr. Dickinson said Beth Ballard will report to Whitney and Carol Lopez will report to Sherry.
Superintendent's leave will now be approved by Gina Windell.

Mrs. Pack said she does not understand moving all these positions under ADE yet they are working at the schools. Superintendents have key people working but reporting to someone else which could leave them out of the loop. Ms. Windell spoke as to how they see this working. They are not trying to take anything away but are there to support both schools and superintendents.

There was much more discussion on several topics including superintendent leave approval, superintendent evaluations, and board involvement when dealing with the schools.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Dr. John McAllister, Chair

Faith McLaughlin, Secretary